



State of Louisiana

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GOVERNOR

**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY
AND
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

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PRESS RELEASE

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STATE AGENCIES ASSIST LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN STORM RESPONSE, CONTINUE TO MONITOR WEATHER CONDITIONS

BATON ROUGE (March 9, 2011) – The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness' (GOHSEP) Crisis Action Team and Louisiana state agencies continue to monitor hazardous weather conditions that brought flooding and tornadoes to parts of Louisiana in recent days. Agencies are deploying resources to local governments to help with rescue and response efforts.

GOHSEP personnel are located in each region of the state to assist local leaders and coordinate requests for state resources. GOHSEP also continues to coordinate damage assessments with the federal government for the City of Rayne after a tornado that occurred on Saturday.

GOHSEP Director Mark Cooper said, "There's been a lot of wind and rain in the state, and we continue to stay in constant communication with local emergency officials to provide impacted areas the resources they need to keep folks safe. As we've seen in the past few days, storms can hit at anytime so it's important families and local officials are prepared. Be sure to go to www.getagameplan.org to get a list of supplies and instructions on protecting you and your loved ones in times of emergency."

The Louisiana National Guard (LANG) deployed two high water vehicles to Jonesville in Catahoula Parish to assist the local government with possible evacuations as the result of flooding.

Approximately 50 Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) agents are on standby in New Orleans because of the heavy rainfall. This far, LDWF has rescued two people, a woman and her young daughter, off the roof of a vehicle that was swept off the road into Big Creek in Tangipahoa Parish Tuesday night. Overnight, LDWF agents also rescued approximately 30 people from two trailer parks near Beaver Creek and transported them to a shelter in Kentwood.

Louisiana State Police (LSP) is monitoring roads for flooding. State Police officials urge drivers to use caution on the roadways and to visit www.lsp.org for a list of road closures in their areas.

The Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) is staging assets and has staff on stand-by for storm-related work, including sending work crews to LA 440 in St. Helena parish, where washed out culverts must be replaced.

High water signage has been deployed and roads are closed as a result of flooding. Downed trees and debris are being removed from roadways.

Various construction sites are closed because of severe weather. For more information on traffic and road conditions, DOTD encourages people to visit the 511 Traveler Information site at www.511la.org.

The Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) is monitoring its facilities in the event evacuations are necessary.

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Mobile Command Unit (MCU) is currently deployed in Rayne to assist residents with applying for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program and other benefits, as well as processing requests for replacement cards and other documents.

DCFS is also working with the American Red Cross (ARC) to determine which shelters will open or remain open for families impacted by tornadoes and flooding. So far, the Acadia Parish shelter in Rayne remains open and ARC has opened a shelter in Tangipahoa Parish where at last report between 100 and 150 homes are flooded.

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has staff on stand-by in the event local governments ask for assistance. DEQ has pre-approved debris management sites throughout the state in which parishes can use to dispose of storm related debris when there is an emergency declaration.

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